

ENGLAND PLANS BIG ECONOMIC REFORMS

To Reorganize System of Expenditures With Object of Conserving Resources of Country.

London, Aug. 3.—One of the first witnesses who will ask for a hearing before Premier Asquith's new committee to inquire into the possibility of effecting economies in the management of the British government's affairs, is Sir A. B. Markham, member of parliament for Nottinghamshire. For several years, both in and out of the house of commons, he has advocated the necessity of a thorough supervision of the expenditure of every branch of government activity. Here is what he will tell the committee, as outlined in an interview:

"There is fearful waste going on in almost every department of the government, but most of all, I think in the war office. The waste there is primarily due to the system of leaving our great war organization in the hands of half-pay officers. We do not encourage young men; they are snubbed by their older superiors whenever they suggest a new business proposition, and all their initiative is killed.

"Every tap is running to waste, for in almost every case the wrong man has control of the tap. In Germany the spending departments were given over to business men at the beginning of the war. We ought to have done the same. We have tried to work with a system which may have done well enough for peace time, but which is useless now. Instead of putting the colossal arrangements into the hands of experienced business men, the war office called up retired officers from all parts of the country—men who, however keen, could not possibly be expected to understand the intricacies of the various organizations necessary.

"It is simply a scandal the way food is being wasted. Take meat. A man is allowed one and a quarter pounds of meat daily. It is impossible to eat so much meat. The result is a quantity is thrown away or sold.

"Another shameful waste of money is taking place in billeting. Hundreds of huts, to my knowledge, have been empty several months because they are not fit to live in. This means that thousands of men are billeted at 17s. 6d. per week when they ought to be living in huts for which we paid to be comfortable and draught and rain proof.

"The greatest scandal of the whole lot has been taking place in the buying of horses. I know of cases where horses have been bought by the war office authorities, sent to camp, and rejected as unfit. They were then sold at an auction, bought again by dealers, sent to the country, and bought again by the war office authorities. A brand is now being used, I am told, on the quarters of the horses, but hitherto the horses were branded on the hoofs, I believe, at any rate, somewhere where the dealers could simply rasp the brand off.

"Take the railways as an instance. They certainly are under government control, but they are managed by business men who meet, I understand, every day.

"I know for a fact that if you want a six penny rubber stamp in a certain government military office you have to get the initials of men in eight different departments.

"Another great waste of the people's money is in coal. Our great railway companies alone consume 40,000 tons of coal per day. They are paying something like 30s a ton for it. The government having guaranteed the dividends of the railway companies, the money of this extra cost comes out of the people's pockets."

A Cruel Wrong to the Unemployed.
In the current issue of Farm and Fireside, the national farm paper published at Springfield, Ohio, the editor calls attention to the story which has been circulated that 18,000 field hands are needed at once on the farms of Oklahoma. This statement may be true but nobody knows whether it is or not. The editor goes on to say:

"The statement may be true, but nobody knows whether it is true or not. It is a reproach against the governments of our States and the nation that we do not know in advance approximately how many hands are going to be needed to harvest the crops.

"There is a tragedy every year in this excuseless treatment of the problem of labor supply in harvest. Poor men spend their last cent, ride bareback, walk the roads and the railway tracks to meet the supposed needs of the farmers for hands. Nobody guides them aright. They go wherever chance and the roads may lead them. Five hundred may go where a hundred can be used. None may go where five hundred could get work.

"Stranded in strange places, workless, moneyless, and angry as they have the right to be—they become a vexation if not a menace to the communities in which they are stranded. Public resentment awakens. Cruelties are practiced. Disorders occur.

"It is all shameful. We ought to organize matters that there would be a man for every job if possible, and no more, and none of this aimless dependence on rumors and wild estimates emanating from irresponsible persons."

Kitchen Repartee.

Mrs. Brown was in the kitchen helping Nora, the cook, prepare supper.

"It's an old saying," she remarked to Nora, "that too many cooks spoil the broth. What do you think?"

"Sure, mam," she replied, "There's nothing to worry about—there's only one cook here." National Monthly.

Training of Child Is Most Important

By MARY E. WYNNE, Boston, Mass.

That the training of the mind and the body of the child is one of society's most important works and that to do this well the home must co-operate with the school, would seem most apparent facts. But a very large proportion of the fathers are so engrossed in getting enough dollars to keep body and soul together that they leave the care of the children wholly in the hands of the mothers.

The crowded tenements afford little opportunity for real home life. Home means merely a place in which to eat and to sleep.

There are hundreds of women like the workingman's wife who said: "I just dreaded Saturdays because the children drove me nearly crazy, but now that a movie picture house has come into our neighborhood I pack the whole five kids off every Saturday and the house is as quiet as on a school day."

In other words, she paid 50 cents a week out of her husband's meager wage to get rid of the sight and sound of her children. Her idea of responsibility to them is to cook for them, to buy their clothes, and when sick to take them to the infirmary.

She represents a large number of parents who think that the chief business of the school is to take the children off their hands for the larger part of the day and to provide a safe place for them to be off the street, but these parents never trouble themselves to know what their children may be learning, nor what habits and ideas they may be forming at school. With multitudes the struggle for mere existence is so strenuous that they have neither the intelligence nor the time for any thought beyond that struggle. Hence poverty is one cause of parents' indifference to the school.

But a far more reprehensible indifference is often found in parents who have had greater opportunities and whose income gives them a chance to think beyond the everlasting demands of the butcher, the baker and—worst of all—the landlord. The other day one of these well-to-do mothers said, "If I had time I should visit Jack's class while Miss ——— is teaching, for Jack, who has always liked school, this year hates it. But I'm so busy I can't find time."

Then she settled down to embroider her initials on bath towels! So busy she could not get time to find out what influences were being exerted on her boy that were showing themselves in an entirely changed attitude towards his school life.

Near the end of the year she received notice by mail from the teacher that Jack's work, which had steadily grown worse throughout the year, would prevent his promotion. Jack would have to take two years to do one year's work. The irate mother now found time immediately to visit the teacher, and expressed vehemently her surprise and indignation that her boy, who had always been considered "smart" by his other teachers, should have done so poorly with her.

When the teacher could get a word in edgewise the mother learned that this year Jack had chosen for his intimate associates a group of idle, cigarette-smoking boys whose influence had been most baneful.

"Surely you know your boy's playmates and have seen his bimonthly reports, for here they are, bearing your signature." Then the poor mother knew that her boy had lied to her when he said his teacher did not send home reports, and had, moreover, forged her signature. Had she or the father taken pains to visit the school early in the year all this might have been averted.

An intelligent interest in the child's welfare would lead the mother to visit in a friendly way each teacher under whose influence her child comes. Since so little of this is done, one must conclude that another large proportion of parents are stupidly indifferent to the importance of the school upon the lives of their children.

Value of Games to School Children

By W. K. SCHULTZE, Cleveland, Ohio

Do teachers and parents sufficiently realize the great and good influence of contests on young people? Every form of game brings the youthful contestants into public view, where they learn to act with dignity, to think and speak on their feet. This publicity begets confidence. Contestants are not afraid to hear their own voices nor to see their own shadows.

In after life everything worth while has to be contested for, and the trained contestants win life's prizes. The medal winners graduate into pathfinders, leaders of men and women. Baseball, football, harness racing, cards, chess, dancing, running, boxing, skating, acting, sailing, rowing, swimming, debating, reciting, music, art work, singing, shooting, fencing, tennis, billiards, lacrosse, all develop manhood and womanhood enormously, if sanely enjoyed.

The bestowal of the laurel wreath upon one's brow or the pinning of the medal on one's chest is an experience which is ennobling and encouraging. Pity those who never experience this ecstasy.

Games develop valuable youthful faculties as nothing else does—memory, the nerves, caution, endurance, bravery, strength, sportsmanlike fairness, sportsmanlike courtesies and application.

Sports inculcate a desire for nice apparel and a handsome bearing. The contestant is never a quitter.

The chest which is adorned with trophies is not liable to belong to a thief, backbiter or weakling of any class. No one realizes what it is to win a hard-fought contest in either of the great fields until he finds himself face to face with the test, with a sea of faces looking on.

Moving Pictures of Benefit to Humanity

By Edward C. Mullikin, Jacksonville, Fla.

The moving picture machine will prove of far greater benefit to humanity than a simple amusement and recreation.

I believe that in a few years motion picture exhibitions will be a part of every school curriculum. A moving picture machine is not an expensive article, and in schools where expensive laboratories are impossible the most delicate experiments in chemistry and physics, as well as more intricate sciences, can be shown with as good results as though the professor were to stand before the class and give them an actual exhibition.

The possibilities of the camera are almost limitless, and in recent years pictures of bacteria have been produced with ease. By the use of the motion picture experiments with the rarest substances and germs shown only in the largest colleges can be brought to the humblest school and displayed, enabling the students to get a training equal to that of a course in a much better equipped college and at less expense.

Lectures can accompany the films and be read during the progress of the picture, to add to its interest and instructiveness.

I am told that the plan has already been tried with great success in some western schools, and I do not doubt that in a few years it will be quite the usual thing.

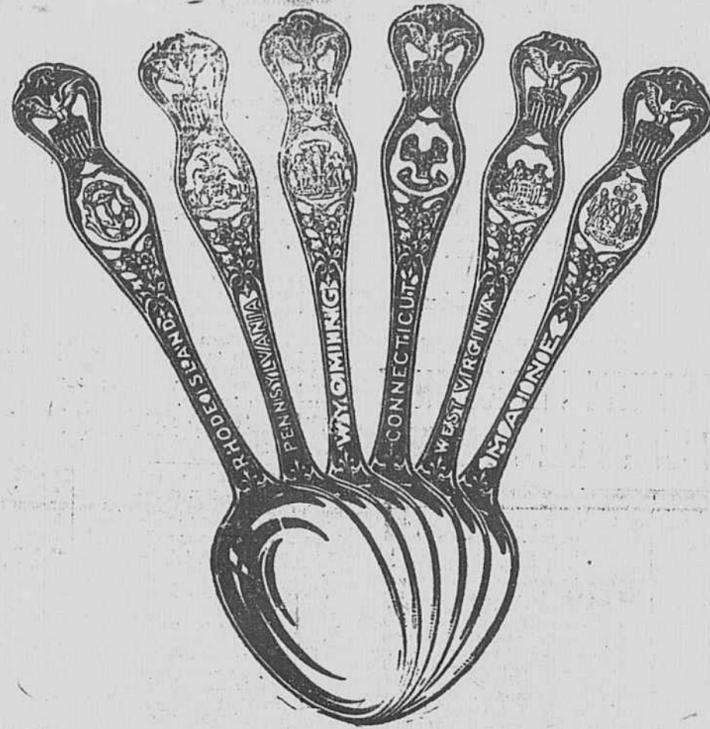
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